

An Interview with Peter Craig

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Interviewer: Zachary M. Schrag

Transcribed by Doug Wilson and edited by Mr. Schrag

Schrag: I'd like to start just by asking you how you first got involved in the freeway fight in Washington. Did you grow up in Washington?

Craig: No. I moved here to the Washington area in 1950. When I was in law school, I had a summer job with the House Judiciary Committee investigating organized baseball and came down first for the summer of 1950. I'm sorry, it was the summer of 1951. That job turned out to be a year-long job. After graduating from law school in '53, I came to - - I accepted a position at Covington & Burling and moved here permanently in 1953. [I] lived a year in Georgetown, three years at Parkfairfax off Shirley Highway in Virginia, and bought this house in 1957.

Schrag: This house on Macomb Street.

Craig: This house on Macomb Street.

Schrag: When you were living in Virginia, how did you get to work?

Craig: I took the bus from Shirlington via Memorial Bridge to downtown. We had a car, but I've never used the car to get to work.

Schrag: Interesting. How was the bus?

Craig: Okay until it queued up at Memorial Bridge. But it was pleasant, convenient. Shirley Highway was only four lanes wide in those days.

Schrag: You were able to sit most of the time?

Craig: Yes. Never a problem that way that I can recall. But in my house, I wanted definitely to live in town and someplace that had convenient transportation to downtown. This area in Cleveland Park is just two blocks east of the streetcar line on Wisconsin Avenue. It seemed an ideal place.

Schrag: Where was Covington & Burling at that time?

Craig: They were at 15th and H Streets in what was then the Union Trust Building on the southwest corner of 15th and H. They have since moved to a Pennsylvania Avenue address.

Schrag: What was your work with the railways at the time?

Craig: None.

Schrag: When did that begin?

Craig: My work at Covington & Burling was primarily in the field of regulation of transportation. One of the principal clients was American Airlines. Most of my work with Covington was representing American

Airlines before the Civil Aeronautics Board and on appeal to the DC Circuit and Supreme Court. I think I had, in ten years at Covington, just one case involving the railroads that I worked on. That was a lawsuit by the non-schedule airlines against all of the railroads for alleged monopolization of movement of troops during World War II. My work on that case was quite limited.

Schrag: There you were actually representing the airlines or the railroads?

Craig: I was representing the railroads. My airline work was with Howard Westwood, one of the partners of the firm. That one railroad case was with Graham Claytor, another partner. When he left Covington in 1963 to become vice president of law at Southern Railway, he wanted to beef up the Southern Railway law department so that they could do more work in-house and not have to rely upon outside counsel. He persuaded me to move to Southern Railway law department. That started in January of '64. My work at Southern Railway was, again, regulatory work -- litigation with other railroads over how to divide freight revenues, so-called divisions cases, and

cases before state regulatory bodies. I got to meet and know Bull Connor, who's chairman of the Alabama Public Service Commission -- one of those cases. I remained at Southern Railway until -- from 1963 until they merged with Norfolk & Western. That was -- oh, I forgot -- close to 1982 or '83. [I] then finished up my legal career at Amtrak after they closed down the Washington office, former Washington office, of Southern Railway and transferred me to Roanoke. I was unwilling to leave Washington, so I went back to work for Graham Claytor, who was then president of Amtrak.

Schrag: The freeway opposition began long before your full-time railway work.

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: What were the origins of that? Do you remember how you first got involved?

Craig: In the late summer of 1959, a gentleman knocked on my door and asked if I would sign a petition against the Northwest Freeway. I didn't know what the hell the Northwest Freeway was. I got talking with him. His name was David Sanders Clark. He showed me the page out of the *Washington Star* which showed the

route of the proposed Northwest Freeway through northwest Washington from the DC line, generally west of Wisconsin Avenue through Fannie Mae building, then crossing Sidwell Friends School property, going down Tilden Street into Rock Creek Park, taking out the Pierce Mill, and then proceeding down through the park to an interchange at about 11th and T Streets, I think. This upset me.

I then helped him organize a neighborhood committee, which was first called the Committee Against the Cross-Park Freeway. We decided that name was a little negative, so we changed it to the Northwest Committee for Transportation Planning. It involved a number of other lawyers living in Cleveland Park.

Schrag: Can you tell me more about the character of Cleveland Park at the time? I imagine it doesn't look too different.

Craig: It's changed very little since 1959.

Schrag: So a lot of trees, a lot of single-family houses.

Craig: A lot of single-family houses built in the era between -- well, some of the oldest ones date to the 1890s. They're along Connecticut and Wisconsin

Avenues. As you move inward towards 34th Street, they become a little newer. Our house here was built in the 1920s, the last house on this block to be built, this and two like it next door. But being located to the old Bureau of Standards, which is now the University of the District of Columbia and new embassies, it attracted educated, middle class type of residents and has, next to Georgetown, been considered a very attractive in-city place to live. We're blessed with good schools, public and private. I remember checking the census. It must have been 1960 or '70 census that the average education of every adult in Cleveland Park was four years of college and two years of graduate school. So it includes a lot of lawyers, a lot of doctors, some congressmen, newspaper people.

Schrag: Were there any congressmen or senators directly involved with your committee? I seem to recall someone, one senator, complaining that he lived in a house that was slated to be demolished.

Craig: I don't recall who that senator would have been.

Schrag: I'd have to look it up.

Craig: There happen to be a number of senators who have lived in this area. Senator [Bill] Bradley still owns the house across the street. He's no longer in the Senate. Fritz Mondale still owns a house on Lowell Street, the street behind me. Tim Wirth used to own a house on 35th Street. But congressmen and senators have been relatively few in this area.

Schrag: So you formed this committee very quickly after the freeway was proposed.

Craig: In 1959.

Schrag: What were the strategies that you used initially to gather support? Was it more door-to-door campaigning and canvassing?

Craig: We had meetings at Sidwell Friends School, meetings to determine how we could get quick results. We sought to enlist the help of the business establishments on Wisconsin Avenue -- Woodward & Lothrop, which would have been demolished, and Fannie Mae. I think they had a separate businessmen's committee organized to fight this freeway. Initially our goal was just to stop the Northwest Freeway. It wasn't any broader than that. But that goal changed after sort of the center of

action moved from the Northwest Committee to the Committee of 100 on the Federal City. Neil Phillips, who is chairman of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, was very much against all of these freeways, which took direct aim on parklands with which he was particularly concerned. He persuaded David Sanders Clark and myself to join the Committee of 100. David Sanders Clark later became chairman himself of the committee, and I became chairman of its transportation committee.

Schrag: When was that, do you remember?

Craig: Sometime in 1960, '61. The Committee of 100's previous chairman of its transportation committee had been Washington I. Cleveland, who was secretary of the American Automobile Association. He and Phillips drew swords over these freeway proposals. Phillips decided that there was too much conflict of interest there to have Washington I. Cleveland, so he was bounced out of the Committee of 100. Neil Phillips also had problems with the parent organization, the American Planning and Civic Association, the head of which was Harland Bartholomew. Harland Bartholomew was, although

relatively on in years at that time, collecting lots of money doing engineering and traffic studies for not only Washington but other cities. He thought it awful that the Committee of 100, which was looked upon as just the Washington chapter of the American Planning and Civic Association, was headed in the opposite direction. This led in 1965 to a complete split of the Committee of 100 from the American Planning and Civic Association. We incorporated that committee as a separate entity in 1965.

Schrag: It seems to me that in origins the Committee of 100 doesn't look that different from the Federal City Council, in that they're both elite businessmen's groups interested in improving downtown. But, of course, they end up opposing each other over the freeway issue. I wonder, is that because of Phillips, if he pulled it away from Bartholomew and the AAA? Was it his personal influence that did that, or was there a difference in composition?

Craig: No. The whole history of the Committee of 100 is totally different than the Board of Trade or Downtown Progress, which was a businessmen's group. The Committee of 100 is not. It has some businessmen

on it, but the makeup of the Committee of 100, which was founded by Frederic A. Delano in 1920, is comprehensive urban planning. It was organized at a time when Washington planning was nonexistent. Its first goal was to get a National Capital Planning Commission created, which started off as the National Capital Park Commission. That succeeded, and then it was expanded into the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. It's rooted in devotion to the L'Enfant plan and the McMillan plan and the concept of sound urban planning in all aspects -- transportation, water, recreational facilities, schools. It attracts a lot of architects, park lovers, city lovers, people without any particular ax to grind in terms of private interest.

It has had remarkable successes through the years. I think it considers its role in the freeway battle and the battle to get a subway system to be one of its crown jewels, so to speak. Have you seen the publication of the Committee of 100 on its seventy-fifth anniversary dealing with the freeway struggle?

Schrag: The piece that was put out by Joseph Passonneau?

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: Yes. I have a copy of that. That's one of the reasons I knew that you were still around. I know you helped them. It seems that they were bucking a trend in the 1950s.

Craig: Oh, yes.

Schrag: Bartholomew was the great man of planning. He worked with [Frederick Law] Olmsted, Jr. and the other creators of the McMillan plan. And he certainly seemed to represent the mainstream of planning. In terms of architecture, Louis Justement was pretty influential it seems. Certainly in the 1940s, at least, he was proposing cloverleaves everywhere. I'm still a little unsure of how exactly the Committee of 100 peeled off from this mainstream thought.

Craig: Well, we didn't consider cloverleaves to be mainstream, first of all. [Laughter]. It was the wasteful use of land for transportation and the inefficiencies of mass transportation in private automobiles -- one person per vehicle for eighty or ninety percent of the vehicles on the road. That's just no way to plan a city. We were devotees of Jane Jacobs and Lewis Mumford and their approach to city

planning. Bartholomew and this other person (whose name I have forgotten) certainly did not represent what we thought was good mainstream planning. That was planning, the result of ninety percent federal subsidies for localities if they would go the freeway route and nothing if they wanted any alternative.

Schrag: Under the [Dwight D.] Eisenhower administration, was anyone listening to either the Northwest Committee or the Committee of 100 -- anyone in the DC government or Bartholomew or up on the Hill? Do you remember what kind of reception you had initially?

Craig: Eisenhower was on the way out. We had heard that Eisenhower personally was appalled at some of these freeway plans in urban areas for what he had conceived as sort of an inter-urban transportation system. Indeed, the proliferation of freeway lane mileage in urban areas came late in the stages of freeway planning as everyone had their eye on that ninety percent federal aid. But we were more focused on the incoming administration. I worked with Tom Farmer, who was also on the Northwest Committee. I and a third lawyer (whose name I forgot) worked with

the [John F.] Kennedy transition team to try to get better appointments to the National Capital Planning Commission to fill the -- to become administrator of the NCTA. I remember our interviewing Darwin Stolzenbach, who had been recommended by Jim Bain. We passed his name along as the person to nominate to be appointed to the NCTA. We managed to get Libby Rowe appointed as chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission. Those political steps proved to be very useful and valuable in stopping the freeway mania and getting some focus on the need for a subway system.

Schrag: I want to get into all of that in more detail, but to back up to the Eisenhower administration, it seems to me that your first great victory was getting the Northwest freeze written into the 1960 National Capital Transportation Act -- that is, no freeways --

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: --west of 12th Street, essentially, we're not going to build the Northwest Freeway for now. Can you tell me how that happened? I haven't found anything

explaining who came up with that or how it got into the law.

Craig: Well, the people on the Northwest Committee -- David Sanders Clark and Tom Farmer and myself, this other lawyer -- came up with this as sort of a stop-gap solution. We had support from the chairman and staff of the House District Committee, McMillan. I remember talking with him and his staff. It seems to me we even had support from Congressman [William H.] Natcher. I remember talking to Natcher in that period, and Natcher thought all of these freeways in Washington were terrible. It created support for the concept. The name Senator [Clifford P.] Case of New Jersey comes to mind. It seems to me that he turned out to be a strong advocate. Support came from a number of areas. This businessmen's group on Wisconsin Avenue had an ex-congressman as a lobbyist. Was his name Hall? I don't remember. He did a lot of personal lobbying on behalf of businessmen along the Wisconsin Avenue corridor. But we worked for what we wanted to get, a head of steam behind the proposal, and managed to get it tacked on to the legislation. Of course, I did a lot of

testifying on it on the Hill. I would suggest to you [that] you look at the hearings.

Schrag: I have, but the thing about congressional hearings is that everyone says what they want, and then the committee disappears for a while and it comes back with a bill. It's hard to get that gap in between. But you were well-received at the House District Committee.

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: Do you know what the role of Edward Burling was? I take that he was the Burling of Covington & Burling.

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: He became -- under Eisenhower's NCTA, he was on the advisory board. Do you know how that happened?

Craig: No, I don't. Edward Burling at that stage was not a very strong person. He was sort of window dressing at Covington & Burling. I'd even forgotten that he had that position. He certainly didn't strike me as being any actor in the controversy.

Schrag: I'm not sure that anyone -- that Eisenhower's NCTA did anything other than keep some chairs warm until the Kennedy people came in. Maybe I'm incorrect.

Craig: I had even forgotten there was an Eisenhower NCTA, because if there was, it wasn't visible.

Schrag: One of the reasons it comes up is that, when Eisenhower was forming the NCTA and looking for an administrator, Ed Burling put your name in.

Craig: I didn't know that. [Laughter].

Schrag: Was he a Republican? Was he connected?

Craig: Yes. Edward Burling was definitely a Republican.

Schrag: I think that may have just been it, that they were looking for some people they could tip in this do-nothing agency for a few months until either the [Richard M.] Nixon or the Kennedy administration came in. So Kennedy is elected in November 1960. Now, you said Thomas Farmer was a member of the Northwest Transportation Committee. Did he live around here?

Craig: He lives three of four houses up the street from me.

Schrag: He does? Okay. Because there is this sort of cabal of lawyers that I'm trying to track. So Thomas Farmer is a member of the committee. The Rowes -- did you know them? Libby and John Rowe.

Craig: I became acquainted with her, yes. I don't think she was active in the Northwest Committee, but she was on the Committee of 100 and was very forcefully in love with the city and wanted to preserve the city against unwanted intrusions. I became very well acquainted with her. She lives just up a couple of blocks north of here in Highland Place, or did at that time.

Schrag: Did you know Charles Horsky?

Craig: Oh, yes. Covington -- he was a partner there.

Schrag: He was? While he was serving as president of the Washington Housing Association?

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: Can you describe his attitude? Was he particularly focused on housing, or did he have a broader agenda?

Craig: He had a broader agenda, but his principal focus was on housing -- housing for the poor. The mind of the highway engineer was to head for cheap land, and cheap lands meant A) parklands and B) urban ghettos. So the lower class housing was pretty much under the gun. Of course, he became -- I knew Charlie well at Covington. He became Kennedy's special assistant on

District affairs, which was a boon to us, because it meant you had access to the White House.

Schrag: Who was your contact on the Kennedy transition team?

Craig: Adam Yarmolinsky. I'm forgetting names. He later became a senator from Pennsylvania.

Schrag: Wofford?

Craig: Harris Wofford.

Schrag: How did they get in touch with this? You've got a sort of group of Cleveland Park residents. Where did Horsky live, I should ask?

Craig: In suburban Maryland.

Schrag: So he was actually in Maryland. One more name was Ed Seeger. Do you know him?

Craig: Ed Seeger. Yes. He was a younger lawyer at Covington & Burling.

Schrag: He was at Covington & Burling, too. This is the kind of thing that is very important but does not show up in the documented record.

Craig: Stolzenbach wanted me to be his chief lawyer at the NCTA. I was unwilling to, and I urged Ed Seeger on him. Ed Seeger was a younger lawyer who was working with us in the airline litigation.

Schrag: Why didn't you want the job?

Craig: Well, at that time I had my eyes on becoming a partner at Covington & Burling, and it would have ended that possibility. As it turned out, I was passed over anyway. I think the feedback from a lot of their clients -- and they represented the Sand and Gravel Association and the American Road Builders Association and lots of people with a finger in the ninety percent federal aid pie. The highway lobby had urged these industries to boycott Covington & Burling. Some of the partners were not happy with my active involvement, so I sort of cut my own throat there.

Schrag: I'm just trying to get this picture here. You've got a bunch of lawyers at Covington & Burling -- Horsky, you, Seeger. Thomas Farmer -- where did he work?

Craig: I don't know when it was, but Al Praither, another lawyer at Covington & Burling, and Ed Seeger decided to set up their own law firm, and Tom Farmer was a part of that. I forgot the name of the law firm. GerryLevenberg was another one from Covington. These three lawyers -- Al Praither, Ed Seeger, and Gerry Levenberg, who had worked on American Airlines

account -- left the firm to set up their own law firm, specializing in transportation and taking American Airlines with them with the blessings of Howard Westwood. Tom Farmer associated with them as a partner, although his expertise is more in international trade and banking.

Schrag: Do you remember what year that split-off was?

Craig: No, I don't. I'm sorry.

Schrag: I can probably look that up.

Craig: Early 60s, I would say.

Schrag: Do you know if it was before or after the inauguration of Kennedy?

Craig: I think it was after, but I'm not sure of that.

Schrag: Do you have any sense of Kennedy's point of view?

That is, when he was elected president, what did he say to Wofford and Yarmolinsky? Or how did he end up recruiting all these people who really reversed federal policy toward the city?

Craig: Unlike Eisenhower, he had lived in Washington and had some, I think, appreciation of Washington as a city, as a place of urban vitality. He quite early was drawn into planning issues, for example,

Lafayette Square. Under the Eisenhower administration it had been proposed to tear down all of the old buildings around Lafayette Square to build the needed addition for the executive offices, which had been outgrown. This prompted the Committee of 100 and other city lovers to urge preservation of Lafayette Square, and a scaled-down plan was proposed that President Kennedy and his wife were shown. They bought the idea, and the plans of the Eisenhower administration were scrapped in favor of plans that were later carried out, which preserved these two- and three-story houses on the west side of Lafayette Square. I don't know whether they are today. He just showed a unique interest in the city that Eisenhower didn't have.

Schrag: Do you think he gave his team a mandate to --

Craig: I have no idea, but we were not going to leave any possibility to chance. We worked to try to get the right people appointed to the right places.

Schrag: Let's go through this. Stolzenbach had testified, I guess, as early as 1959, questioning Bartholomew's plans. Do you remember -- you said that he had sort

of been vetted by your group. Do you remember who arranged that?

Craig: He had been vetted?

Schrag: That is, you had interviewed Stolzenbach for the Northwest Committee, is that right?

Craig: Well, I interviewed him at Covington & Burling. He knew I was involved in filling vacant jobs in the new administration. He came to introduce himself to me, and he did the same with Tom Farmer. We ultimately urged that -- or Tom Farmer ultimately urged that he be appointed. I think it was through Adam Yarmolinsky and company.

Schrag: Lee White is another figure who was in the White House. Do you remember who -- I'm not quite clear what his role was, why he was working with Horsky on these issues.

Craig: I don't know Lee White.

Schrag: If Kennedy got a lot of these right people into administration jobs -- Stolzenbach and Farmer and Rowe --

Craig: Well, Farmer was never appointed to anything.

Schrag: He was on the advisory board for the NCTA.

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: I guess that was not a full-time job, but even so, he did have an official title in that regard. Do you know why Kennedy did not sweep out the District government? That is, the people who -- the commissioners, particularly Tobriner, seems to have done nothing. They eased out [Gen. Frederick] Clarke, who had been appointed by Eisenhower, and put in [Gen. Charles] Duke, who was equally pro-freeway.

Craig: I don't think that appointment was even cleared at the White House level. I think that's the Corps of Engineers internal politics in terms of engineer commissioner. I think the commissioners were appointed for definite terms, and they didn't coincide with the change in the presidency.

Schrag: Right. And Clarke was appointed under Eisenhower. I guess I was more asking about Duke. Then [Walter] Tobriner, I think, was appointed by Kennedy. He seems quite different from all these more active planning types that you've described. Do you know why that was?

Craig: I don't. I don't recall that we were focusing very much on the DC commissioners but more towards getting home rule and displacing the institution, including particularly the engineer commissioner.  
[Laughter].

Schrag: We meaning the Committee of 100 was working for home rule?

Craig: The Committee of 100, I think, pretty much took a neutral attitude on that, but people on the Committee of 100, like myself, were very much for home rule -- Charlie Horsky and so on. They felt that if we could get to elected mayor and elected council, the true feelings of DC residents would be manifest at that level.

Schrag: Was that tied into transportation planning in your mind, that this would be one of the ways to get a more sane policy, would be to have self-government?

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: Did you -- who were the leaders of the home rule movement? I need to do more reading on this. Were you in touch with Walter Washington, for example?

Craig: Not so much Walter Washington as [John] Hechinger and Libby Rowe and Polly Shackelton. I've always

been a Democrat. We worked closely with the Democratic Central Committee through these years.

Craig: They were solidly behind our pro-subway, anti-freeway philosophy all along. You can probably see the testimony by them before congressional committees.

Schrag: You call it a pro-subway, anti-freeway movement.

When did pro-subway get added on to the anti-freeway sentiment? As you say, this began as a protest movement saying what not to build.

Craig: Very early. That became an early argument. These planners say we need all these freeways, and they won't work, and we need to build a subway. Let's build a subway first and see if we ever need another freeway. The big opponent all the time were the Downtown Progress, the Board of Trade, and the local newspapers, which were solidly against any opposition to the freeways, therefore, anything that the freeway planners showed them.

Schrag: Did you ever understand that position?

Craig: Well, the people they talked to -- their advertisers -- are all people on the Board of Trade. Their major source of their income was their advertisers. The

highway lobby and all of its manifestations were always working on the newspapers to be on their side. They were among the last to change their position on the issue.

Schrag: The Board of Trade just wanted freeways --

Craig: They wanted the money. If at the beginning there had been ninety percent federal aid for subways as well as freeways, it would have been an entirely different story.

Schrag: That's my sense. They also thought that freeways would be done quickly, whereas subways --

Craig: If you had ninety percent federal aid for outdoor toilets, they would be all for outdoor toilets. Simple as that. They wanted that federal money spent in the District of Columbia. It was not -- the freeway battle was not won until the Highway Trust Fund was opened up and made available for any type of transportation solution, which is the way it should have been in the beginning.

Schrag: That's very helpful. In the Kennedy administration, you seem to have had no trouble getting Charlie Horsky on the phone or Stolzenbach or whoever you needed. That is, even though you were outside of

government, if you needed statistics to be extracted from the highway department, you just called up Horsky and he would send a note on White House stationery. Is that more or less correct?

Craig: It could be. I was able to get anything I wanted, I recall. I usually made the direct approach first.

Schrag: Then prior to mid-1960s you were getting turned down. My impression is that the DC Department of Highways -- I guess it was Aitken at that time?

Craig: Yes. Harold Aitken and Lloyd Rivard hated my guts.

Schrag: Do you have any favorite stories about confronting these guys or public hearings? Just anecdotes about what they were like.

Craig: The only one that I recall is the day that Kennedy was assassinated. I was meeting with the engineer commissioner and Harold Aitken in the District building when they received word that Kennedy had been assassinated. They looked at each other and smiled. One of them said, "We don't have to worry about him anymore."

Schrag: Wow. Then they must have been a bit disappointed with [Lyndon B.] Johnson, because my impression is that Johnson did not reverse policies. He kept the

same team. Ultimately Stolzenbach resigned, but that wasn't until 1965. He kept Horsky all the way through. Like Kennedy, he had lived in Washington many years before arriving in the White House. Do you have any sense that his policies were different from Kennedy's?

Craig: No. In fact, you have to remember Lady Bird, too. She was very much in favor of beautifying the city and the city beautiful. I don't think he had as personal an involvement as Kennedy had, but he was quite happy to let Charlie Horsky continue to run the District for him and was anxious to create the Department of Transportation, which was needed to have someone knock heads with the Bureau of Public Roads. So I was quite pleased when I had the call to -- Paul Sutton, was that his name?

Schrag: Sitton.

Craig: He said that Alan Boyd wanted a bomb thrower to be assistant general counsel for litigation and was I interested in the job. I went down and had an interview with Alan Boyd, Paul Sitton, and others and was appointed to be the first assistant general counsel for litigation, which withdrew me from the

local scene for two years. Fortunately, Bob Kennon, another young lawyer, had got heavily involved in this, and he was able to sort of take over where I had left off.

Schrag: On the Committee of 100?

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: By that time -- let me back up.

Craig: That was 1967.

Schrag: Yes. Stolzenbach's proposal for I-70 was to combine this kind of Y configuration, to have it go along the B&O tracks where the red line to Silver Spring is now. That seemed acceptable to you at the time, if I'm correct.

Craig: Yes.

Schrag: Indeed, that would have connected both 95 and I-70 to Virginia, done a lot of the work. Do you have any sense of why that wasn't built?

Craig: Well, because the citizens' position was getting more and more solidified against freeways generally. It had started off [as] let's protect northwest Washington. I can vividly remember a call from

Sammie Abbott. He says, "The only part of the city you care about is northwest Washington."

Schrag: Who is Sam Abbott?

Craig: He is head of the organization called Save Takoma Park. Without Sammie Abbott, we wouldn't have been successful. He later became mayor of Takoma Park. He led the Save Takoma Park committee initially, and then he and I joined forces. He was keeping the view of -- [recording paused due to telephone call].

I'm not sure when the transition in my own thinking occurred. But I was terribly uneasy of the criticism from other parts of the city that it was just wealthy northwest Washington to be protected and leave the rest of the city open to the freeway builders to crash through and destroy everything. So Sammie Abbott persuaded me to expand my horizons.

The Committee of 100 did, too, to take a position [of] no new freeways within the outer capital beltway. That became our position and the position behind which we could unify the entire city.

Schrag: But that initial expansion came from Takoma Park and not from northeast DC. I guess I'm trying to get at some of the race and class issues of the freeway

protest here. It seems that initially it was pretty much white professional, Cleveland Park and the Palisades, as the centers of opposition. Then you have white professional Takoma Park, if the neighborhood hasn't changed too much. Only later did people like [Marion] Barry, for example, get involved in Shaw and northeast and so forth. Is that more or less accurate?

Craig: We worked on getting support early on from Walter Fauntroy. Then G. Franklin Edwards was added to the planning commission. He lives on 16th Street. This was a gradual process, but through Sammie Abbott's agitation -- and he worked closely with all organizations in the north-central, northeast corridor opposing even the NCTA's proposal. Sammie and I worked together and with Neil Phillips and the Committee of 100 to have a major forum in 1965 about freeways in the city. Behind you is the -- underneath the Committee of 100 report is the brochure that Sammie and I put out. Do you have a copy of that?

Schrag: No. It's probably a copy at GW somewhere. It's "Freeways in Our City."

Craig: Why don't you just take that along?

Schrag: That would be great. Do you have many copies of this?

Craig: I have several.

Schrag: Great. So at this point, you're saying nothing within the beltway. Is that correct?

Craig: Nothing inside the capital beltway.

Schrag: How did the beltway change the geography? That is, by the late 60s you are arguing that because we have the beltway, the whole city is, in a sense, protected from through traffic, and so we don't need an inner loop for through traffic. In fact, we don't need the Three Sisters bridge because Cabin John is actually going to be the key Potomac crossing. Do you remember -- I think I have the picture down. Do you remember how the completion of the beltway changed your thinking?

Craig: It had been our hope -- both the Committee of 100 generally and I, too, favored the completion of the capital beltway. It was our hope that once this was built, the year to year increases in traffic into Washington and through Washington would decline. I think that did happen. At least that's what this

1965 brochure argues, and the talk about needing more freeways inside the beltway was silly. All we needed was to get moving with a subway, which should have been done long ago, and that wasting money on freeways was wasting money and destroying the city.

Schrag: By the late 60s, this has all become one -- sort of all the forces pile up around the Three Sisters bridge, which is a little hard in retrospect to understand the massive inputs of energy on both sides. A lot of people, such as Jackson Graham, were saying, "Let's build it. Let's not build it. It's a little bridge." Yet it becomes almost the Stalingrad of the whole national freeway fight. It's the symbolism of it. Can you explain to me how that happened? That is, why it was so important to -- why it became so important and who was living there? I know, for example, that William Douglas and his wife were sort of tied into their whole effort to preserve the canal. But was there anything particularly important about the Three Sisters bridge?

Craig: It was symbolic of a lot of freeways that would then be the natural consequence of that. It wasn't just

the Three Sisters bridge; it was changing a four-lane Whitehurst Freeway to a mammoth freeway. It was constructing the north leg of the inner loop, and it was constructing the east leg of the inner loop. But the Three Sisters bridge and the Potomac freeway and the east leg freeway and the north-central freeway were all part of the litigation that the city at large supported, initiated by the Committee of 100.

Schrag: So if you killed the Three Sisters bridge, then you've protected the whole city. Is that it?

Craig: Well, you wanted to knock out any key element of it, yes. It was trying to stop any new construction within the beltway. We didn't have necessary support on the Virginia side to be effective that way, but we did in the DC and suburban Maryland.

Schrag: My last question is, in the long view, this fight isn't really over. That is, there are fights now around the Wilson Bridge. Indeed, Covington & Burling is still involved in some context in that. Are you still involved in any of these new debates?

Craig: No, I am not. It took fifteen years of my life, late 1959 until the Highway Trust Fund was opened up. I finally decided in 1975 that fifteen years [was

enough]. I did a little more litigation against -- in the last years -- against what I thought were ill-advised zoning changes. They were, in effect, to build a mini-city in McLean Gardens and another mini-city on Connecticut Avenue just south of Macomb Street and a development in southeast Washington and one at Friendship Heights and the Georgetown waterfront. I just had enough, I decided. So I pretty much ceased to become involved about 1975.

Schrag: So it was that national highway act --

Craig: I felt I could turn it over to others.

Schrag: Interesting. One of the paradoxes, of course, is that that comes in under Nixon, Eisenhower's vice president. After eight years of Democratic administrations, it's actually Nixon who busts the trust. Maybe I should just do more reading on this, and if I come up with any more questions ask you later.

I guess my last thing then is if you have any clues to the character of these various activists. The story about the engineer commissioner and the highway director is very good. Stolzenbach or Libby Rowe or Farmer or Horsky -- if you have any sense of

their vision of the city and how they came to it.

I'm sorry if that's vague.

Craig: Well, I think read Jane Jacobs, and they're all followers of Jane Jacobs.

Schrag: So they're all reading Jane Jacobs. I think that's all the questions I have for now that I can ask intelligently. If I can formulate these a little more clearly, I'll call you up again. Thank you very much, and I'll stop the tape now.

[End of Interview]

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